

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please AMEND claims 1-3, 5-8 and 10-13 and CANCEL claim 9, which is rewritten as newly added dependent claim 15, in accordance with the following:

1. (Currently Amended) A cryptographic communication system comprising:
 - a key distribution server for distributing a key used to decrypt encrypted information; and
 - a specific number of subscriber terminals using said information, wherein said key distribution server distributes:
 - an encrypted first group key used to decrypt said information;
 - individual decryption information respectively corresponding to each one of said specific number of subscriber terminals and used to perform decryption of said first group key; and
 - individual terminal unique key update information respectively corresponding to each one of said specific number of subscriber terminals and used to perform a part of decryption of a second group key, said second group key being updated after a group key is updated,and wherein said specific number of subscriber terminals decrypt said first group key distributed from said key distribution server by use of results obtained by processing operations performed based on said terminal unique key update information previously obtained and used to decrypt said first group key, as well as by use of said decryption information distributed from said key distribution server.
2. (Currently Amended) The cryptographic communication system according to claim 1, wherein said specific number of subscriber terminals implement a part of decryption of said group key, said decryption being performed using said individual terminal unique key update information, before distribution of said group key.

3. (Currently Amended) The cryptographic communication system according to claim 1, wherein said key distribution server distributes to said specific number of subscriber terminals terminal unique key update information, used to decrypt said first group key, together with a third group key, said third group key being in a state before said third group key gets updated to said first group key.

4. (Original) The cryptographic communication system according to claim 1, wherein in the event where said key distribution server updates said group key, said key distribution server determines which subscriber terminals among said specific number of subscriber terminals are to be excluded and distributes to said specific number of subscriber terminals, together with said group key being updated, said decryption information used by remaining subscriber terminals other than said subscriber terminals to be excluded to make said remaining subscriber terminals able to decrypt said group key being updated.

5. (Currently Amended) A computer readable medium having executable instructions stored thereon to cause a key distribution server for to distributeing a key used to decrypt encrypted information, the computer readable medium comprising:

means for generating a first group key used to decrypt said information and encrypting said first group key;

means for generating individual decryption information used to perform decryption of said first group key and corresponding to subscriber terminals;

means for generating individual terminal unique key update information used to perform a part of decryption of a second group key, said second key being updated after a group key is updated, and corresponding to said subscriber terminals; and

means for respectively distributing said first group key, said decryption information and said terminal unique key update information to each one of said corresponding subscriber terminals.

6. (Currently Amended) The ~~key distribution server~~computer readable medium according to claim 5, wherein said means for generating said decryption information determines which terminals among said subscriber terminals are to be excluded and generates said decryption information used by remaining subscriber terminals other than said subscriber terminals to be excluded in order to make said remaining subscriber terminals able to decrypt said group key.

7. (Currently Amended) A computer readable storage medium having executable instructions stored thereon to cause a terminal device to operate, the computer readable storage medium comprising:

means for retrieving from a specific key distribution server an encrypted group key, the encrypted group key being usable to~~encrypted to~~ decrypt encrypted information, and individual terminal unique decryption information uniquely corresponding to the terminal device used to decrypt said group key;

means for performing a part of decryption of said group key before distribution of said group key; and

means for decrypting said group key by use of results obtained by processing operations performed based on a part of decryption of said group key and said decryption information retrieved from said key distribution server.

8. (Currently Amended) A computer readable storage medium having executable instructions stored thereon to execute a program for controlling a computer and then distributing a key used to decrypt encrypted information, said program making said computer have capabilities including:

a function of generating a first group key used to decrypt said information and encrypting said first group key;

a function of generating individual decryption information used to perform decryption of said first group key and corresponding to subscriber terminals;

a function of generating individual terminal unique key update information used to perform a part of decryption of a second group key, said second key being updated after a group key is updated, and corresponding to said subscriber terminals; and

a function of respectively distributing said first group key, said decryption information and said key update information to each one of said corresponding subscriber terminals via specific communication means.

9. (Cancelled)

10. (Currently Amended) A computer readable recording storage-medium having executable instructions stored thereon for recording a program thereon for controlling a computer and then achieving a specific function, said program making said computer have capabilities including:

a function of retrieving from a specific key distribution server an encrypted group key, the encrypted group key being usable to decrypt encrypted information, a group key encrypted to decrypt encrypted information and individual computer unique decryption information uniquely corresponding to the computer used to decrypt said group key via specific communication means;

a function of performing a part of decryption of said group key before distribution of said group key; and

a function of decrypting said group key by use of results obtained by processing operations performed based on a part of decryption of said group key and said decryption information retrieved from said key distribution server.

11. (Currently Amended) A computer readable recording storage medium having executable instructions stored thereon ~~recording a program thereon~~ for controlling a computer and then distributing a key used to decrypt encrypted information, said program being made readable by said computer so as to make said computer have capabilities achieved through use of said program, said program including:

a function of generating a first group key used to decrypt said information and encrypting said first group key;

a function of generating individual decryption information used to perform decryption of said first group key and corresponding to subscriber terminals;

a function of generating individual terminal unique key update information used to perform a part of decryption of a second group key, said second key being updated after a group key is updated, and corresponding to said subscriber terminals; and

a function of respectively distributing said first group key, said decryption information and said key update information to each one of said corresponding subscriber terminals via specific communication means.

12. (Currently Amended) A computer readable storage medium having executable instructions stored thereon ~~recording medium recording a program thereon~~ for controlling a computer and then achieving a specific function, said program being made readable by said computer so as to make said computer have capabilities achieved through use of said program, said program including:

a function of retrieving from a specific key distribution server an encrypted group key, the encrypted group key being usable to decrypt encrypted information, ~~a group key encrypted to decrypt encrypted information~~ and individual computer unique decryption information uniquely corresponding to the computer used to decrypt said group key via specific communication means;

a function of performing a part of decryption of said group key before distribution of said group key; and

a function of decrypting said group key by making use of results obtained by processing operations performed based on a part of decryption of said group key and said decryption information retrieved from said key distribution server.

13. (Currently Amended) A key sharing method for making a specific number of terminals share a key used to decrypt encrypted information, said specific number of terminals making use of said information, said method comprising:

a step of making said specific number of terminals perform a part of decryption of an encrypted group key used to decrypt said information before distribution of said group key;

a step of respectively distributing to said specific number of terminals said group key and individual terminal unique decryption information uniquely corresponding to each one of said specific number of terminals used to perform a part of remaining decryption other than said part of decryption of said group key and corresponding to said specific number of terminals; and

a step of making said specific number of terminals perform decryption of said group key using said unique decryption information being distributed and results obtained by performing a part of decryption of said group key, said part of decryption previously being performed.

14. (Original) The key sharing method according to claim 13, wherein information used to perform said part of decryption is distributed in advance of distribution of said group key to said specific number of terminals together with said group key, said group key being in a state before being updated.

15. (New) The recording-medium according to claim 11, wherein said function of generating individual unique decryption information determines which subscriber terminals among said subscriber terminals are to be excluded and generates said unique decryption information used by remaining subscriber terminals other than said subscriber terminals to be excluded in order to make said remaining subscriber terminals able to decrypt said group key.